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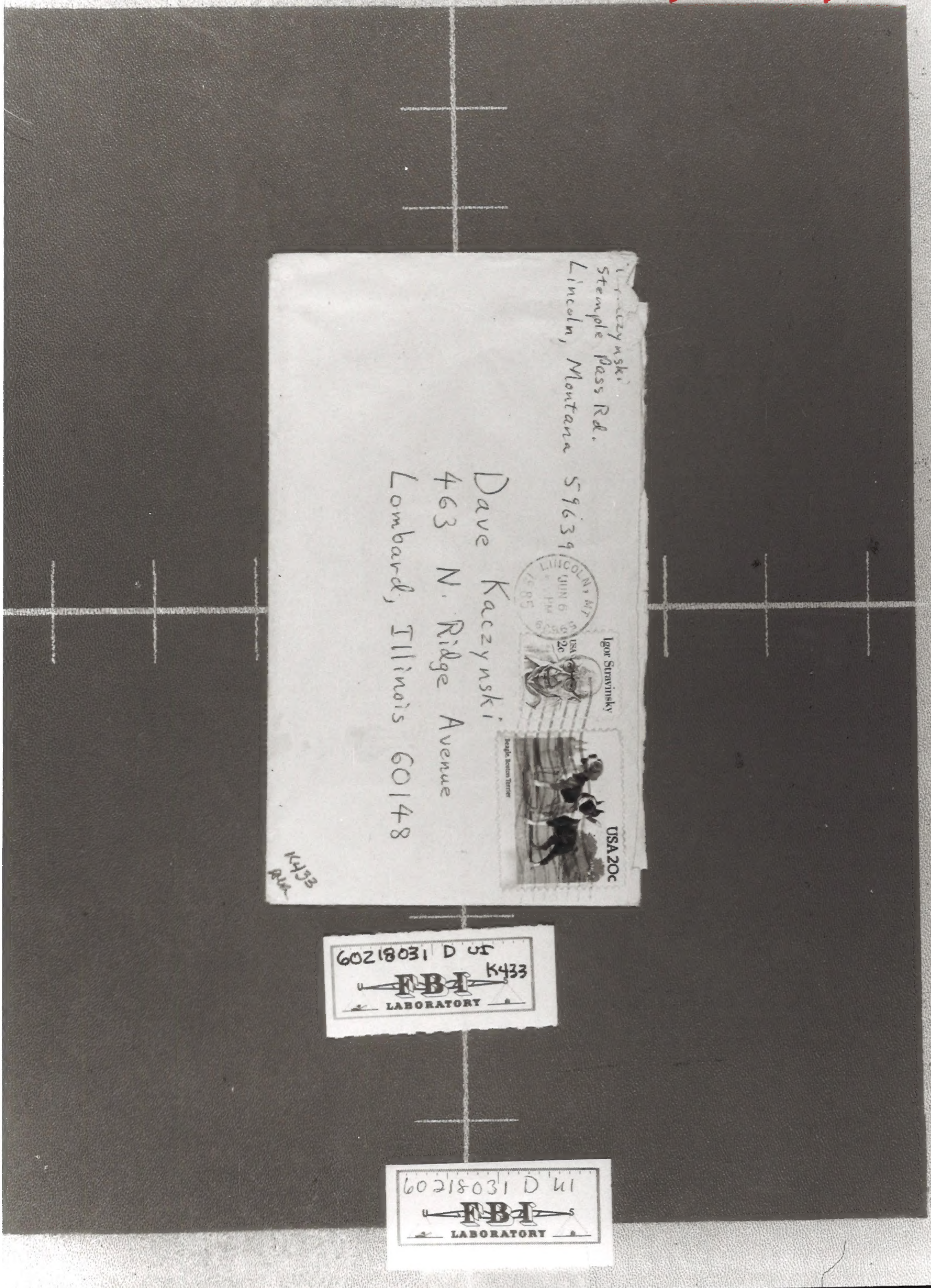
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Dave

Dear Dave:

I came across a curious anecdote concerning the philosopher Hegel. I assume that the story is apocryphal, but since you're a sucker for philosophy (pardon me for putting it that way, but you know my opinions), and since the incident is amusing, here it is:

El 14 de octubre de 1806, Hegel, el célebre filósofo, entonces profesor en Jena, estaba sentado a su escritorio y trabajaba un tratado. De repente, unos fragmentos grandes de hierro se desparramaron sobre el escritorio. Llamó Hegel a la camarera y le preguntó enfadado: — ¿Qué desarreglo es éste? — La muchacha le enteró de que peleaban en las calles los prusianos y los franceses, y que era esto la causa del alboroto. — Lo mismo da, no me importa — respondió Hegel — — A mí no me interesa eso de ninguna manera; ten cuidado de que pueda trabajar yo en paz. — Era aquél el día de la gran batalle de Jena, donde el ejército prusiano fue casi aniquilado por Napoleón.

I received the book you sent me for my birthday. It was well chosen — it was the sort of book I would have been likely to buy for myself. I have read part of it already, and I like the stories — some of them have considerable charm. And of course they give a glimpse of Hispanic folk-culture. Thank you very much.

I was amused by the Mexican comic book. (But you should have included a critical analysis by Hoken Edwardson explaining the hidden philosophical messages.)

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Thanks very much for taking the trouble to look up those 2 periodicals that publish translations; but I don't think either of them looks very promising. "Mundus Artium" sounds like an art type of publication, which probably would pay little if anything; the thing published by "the Translation Center" located in a "Mathematics building" sounds like some kind of a technical project — maybe associated with attempts at machine translation or something like that. Anyway, what I was interested in was something like a continuing (even if small) source of income.

As for Mirror of the Sea, if my memory serves me, the Great Falls public library had a copy of it, though I never had a chance to read more than a small part of it. The Helen M. Nectarine Memorial Library in Lombard doubtless could get you a copy through the Interlibrary Loan Service or whatever they call it.

No doubt you're quite right in supposing that that bus-driving job would be bad for me. I had had some such misgivings myself, but your discription makes it sound even worse than I had thought.

What is the general employment situation in the Chicago area now — factory jobs and so forth? Of course, I'd have to get an apartment or something — couldn't stay with our parents. I can't endure them anymore.

Your offer to give me $200.00 for bus fare is very generous — but I couldn't accept it. Thanks for the offer, anyway.

Well, O.K., I'm definitely prepared to come down there to see you in Texas this year, if it's agreeable

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to you. But: First of all, there is a risk that I might have to call it off on fairly short notice. Those Gehring bitches are planning to log off some of their woods very close to my place. I don't know just when they're going to do it. Of course there's nothing I ~~can~~ can do to prevent them, but I can see to it that they don't do it in such a way as to fuck up my water supply. I've talked to the water quality bureau about it and, so far, it doesnt look as if there is going to be a problem. But if difficulties should arise, I might have to stay around here to take care of my water. Of course, as in your case, any serious emergency might prevent my making the trip, but I'm willing to commit myself to coming barring some serious reason for calling it off.

What I had in mind was this: When I come down there, after a day or two of rest, we would go down to Mexico to just sort of look things over for a few days and try to get an idea of what the wilderness situation is there. After we've got our bearings and have some information, then we can make a joint decision about whether we want to try a trip into the desert, and if so, what kind of trip and where. Please let me know whether this is agreeable to you.

As for my doing the talking when we have to communicate in Spanish, I can promise to try, but I cant guarantee how successful I will be. You understand that learning to read and write

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a language is one thing, and oral-aural communication is another. At best, I am sure that I will be unable to understand when they talk at their normal rate of speed; I'll have to ask them: "Señor, hágame el favor de hablar despacio. Soy extranjero y no entiendo fácilmente español." Also, there might be some problem with local dialects in out-of-the-way places. In some of my books there are samples of the gaucho dialect that is or was spoken in the back-country of Argentina, and it is different enough from standard Spanish so that, while I imagine I could communicate with someone speaking that dialect, it would be with difficulty.

What are you planning to do about immunizations, "Montezuma's revenge", and so forth? Better get information about that right away, cause they say you have to get some of these immunizations several months in advance. Remember that book Along the Gringo Trail, by Jack Epstein, that we found in the Lombard library? I think that had some information on immunizations. If you find out anything, please let me know.

Probably the most convenient time for me to come would be around the middle of November, but it really doesn't make a very big difference for me. Let me know when would be the most convenient time for you, and please mention an alternate time in case the first is too unsuitable for me. Do you still have your car running so that you can pick me up at Alpine?

Our parents are mistaken. I have my birth certificate here.

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A reasonably prompt answer to the essential parts of this letter would be convenient, so that we can decide early on a definite date for my arrival.

— Ted

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P.S. There are some discrepancies that I'd like to get straightened out in your account of the documents needed to visit Mexico. Some time ago you said that no documents were necessary. In your next-to-last letter you said Mexican agents require only either a birth certificate or a passport. In your latest letter you said you thought I would want to take both a birth certificate and a passport. How necessary is the passport? According to my information, the fees for the passport would come to something like $42.00. Plus cost of 2 passport photos — let's guess $10.00 Plus $6 for round-trip to Helena to

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take care of the business. I'd probably have to stay overnight in Helena, so it probably would cost me at least $75.00, which I can ill afford, to get a passport.

Come to think of it, the best time for me to come might be January rather than November. But let me know your preferences.

Just in case I do have to apply for a passport, our father's birthplace is Pittsburg, Pennsylvania and our mother's is Zanesville, Ohio, right?

As for "The Forest people", from what you wrote I had the impression that your interest in having a copy is slight. If you ever decide you really want it, or if I mis-interpreted and you actually do have a real interest in having the book, let me know and I'll send it. Mean-while I'll just keep it.

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